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ABSTRACT

This evaluation of the State Incentive Grant (SIG) training program in 1993-94 compared five schools in the city of New York with relatively high involvement in SIG training and good planning with five schools reported to have low SIG involvement and poor planning. The evaluation also included a sampling of workshops at the District 75 annual conference and an assessment of Central Consultation Committee (CCC) meetings. Interviews with educators found that the highly involved schools were more aware of the role and function of the school-based advisory committees (SBACs), their SBACs had adopted more strategies to inform staff about SIG options, the SBACs more actively sought input from staff regarding their professional interests, and their administrators participated more at SBAC meetings and encouraged SBAC initiatives. The District 75 annual conference attracted more educators than the previous year, and most workshops were well received by participants. The CCC appeared to be committed to developing strategies to maximize staff participation and improve the way staff development is delivered. Recommendations include: increase staff participation in SIG and enhance the effectiveness of the SBACs, capitalize on the successes of previous annual staff conferences, improve the effectiveness of the SIG Coordinator, and expand CCC's influence on the performance of the SBACs. Appendices provide supporting data. (JDD)

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OER Report

State Incentive Grant

District 75/Citywide Special Education

Staff Development Program

(SIG)

1993-94

EC 303638

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State Incentive Grant

District 75/Citywide Special Education

Staff Development Program

(SIG)

1993-94

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SUMMARY

The Office of Educational Research's (OERs) evaluation of the SIG training program in 1993-94 focused on a comparison of five schools with relatively high involvement in SIG training and good planning in previous years (A schools) with five schools reported to have low SIG involvement and poor planning (B schools). The evaluation also included a sampling of workshops at the District 75 annual spring conference and an assessment of a few Central Consultation Committee (C.C.C.) meetings.

Interviews with chairpeople of school-based advisory committees (SBACs), teachers, paraprofessionals, RSPs, and school administrators, and a survey of all staff at the ten participating schools suggest that, compared to the B schools, the A schools as a group were more actively involved in the SIG process, and more aware of the role and function of the SBACs. In addition, the SBACs in the A schools had adopted a greater variety of strategies to inform staff about SIG options, and more actively sought input from staff regarding their professional interests. The findings in the B schools, however, were not consistent, in that some B schools did as well or better than A schools on a few of the variables. Another factor found more often in A schools was the influence administrators were having on their staffs' participation in SIG. Administrators in A schools were more active in their participation at SBAC meetings and in their encouragement of SBAC initiatives. Finally, the survey data indicates that A school respondents benefited to a greater extent from SIG training in 1992-93 than their B school counterparts.

The District annual conference in spring 1994 attracted a total of 1,972 special educators and 271 non-district staff, an increase of eleven percent over the previous year. Of the 11 workshops evaluated by OER three received outstanding ratings from the participants: "How to Deal With Verbal Abuse", "Attention Deficit Disorders" and "Conflict Resolution". Most of the other workshops were also well received by the participants.

The SIG C.C.C. appeared to be committed to the task of developing strategies to maximize staff participation and improve the way staff development is delivered in District 75. However, the decision-making roles of the committee and the SIG Coordinator appear to overlap at times, thus raising the question about the primary role of the C.C.C. Some clarification about their respective roles is needed in order for the C.C.C. and the SIG Coordinator to achieve the collaboration noted in the District 75 SIG Implementation Plan Highlights.

These findings indicate that SIG staff development should be continued next year, with the implementation of the following suggestions:

To increase staff participation in SIG and enhance the effectiveness of the SBACs:

- The SBACs should, at their next citywide meeting, discuss and share some of the successful strategies employed by the A schools designed to inform staff about SIG options and encourage their input in the planning and implementation process.

- The C.C.C. should encourage school-based administrators to become more involved in SIG as active members of their SBACs.

- Members of the C.C.C. should provide on-site assistance to SBACs at schools where staff interest and participation in SIG is less than desirable.

- Schools should be encouraged to share their staff development experiences and successes. Joint planning and implementation of SIG options between neighboring schools would stimulate interest and make for more effective utilization of skilled presenters.

To capitalize on the successes of last year's annual staff conference:

- Workshops that attracted large audiences and received high ratings from participants should be repeated to accommodate wider participation. Identify the reasons for the poorly attended and/or less successful workshops and adopt necessary scheduling and presenter changes.

- Hold the conference earlier in the school year to give participants an opportunity to identify areas of particular relevance to their school's needs, enabling SBAC members to tap into a resource pool of potential presenters.

- Consider holding borough SBAC workshops to encourage intra-school SIG staff development activities.

To improve the effectiveness of the SIG Coordinator, and expand C.C.C.'s influence on the performance of the SBACs:

- Members of the C.C.C. should begin the practice of making site visits to schools to provide support and technical assistance to administrators and SBACs. The main goal of

the C.C.C. representatives would be to help schools obtain a consensus on what constitutes their greatest needs or highest priorities, from which the SIG options can be developed.

- The advisory and decision-making roles of the C.C.C. should be clarified and the decision-making responsibilities of the SIG Coordinator clearly defined. It appears that the best interests of the SIG program would be served by a more collaborative working relationship between the C.C.C. and the SIG Coordinator.

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I. INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The State Incentive Grant (SIG) Staff Development project was inaugurated in 1986-87 by the Division of Special Education (D.S.E.) as a mandatory five-day staff development program for all eligible special education staff. In 1987-88, each district 75/Citywide school designed its own staff development program to meet the needs of its teachers and paraprofessionals, as indicated in a needs assessment.

The 1988-89 program retained its participant-driven philosophy, and the evaluation by the Office of Educational Research (OER) found that participants' reactions to the enrichment programs* in particular were overwhelmingly positive, as were their responses to the annual spring conference. This format was continued in 1989-90 and again in 1990-91.

In 1991-92 most participants in school-based training, the enrichment programs, and the annual spring conference reported that their experiences were instructionally useful and appropriate for their classes.

In 1992-93 the OER evaluation of the SIG program focused on selected aspects of the enrichment program and a sampling of the workshops at the annual spring conference. The point and time out systems in the Power of Choice enrichment program were being implemented successfully by the participating schools. A new

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* Enrichment programs included such districtwide options as Conflict Resolution, and Power of Choice.

enrichment program component, Anger Control, was also successfully being implemented in District 75. Each of the spring conference workshops in the sample evaluated by OER received high ratings from the participants.**

PROGRAM STRUCTURE FOR CURRENT YEAR

In 1993-94 a SIG grant in the amount of $1,200,000 enabled District 75 to continue to provide professional development opportunities for eligible special education staff serving students with severe and profound handicapping conditions. One full-time staff development facilitator was responsible for monitoring and coordinating all staff development activities. In addition, this facilitator served as a liaison between district and field personnel and worked closely with the Central Consultation Committee (C.C.C.), whose function was to establish operational guidelines, oversee the implementation of the SIG program, and monitor and evaluate the progress of the program. The C.C.C. was composed of members of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), Council of Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), and representatives of District 75 staff.

SIG GOALS AND OPTIONS IN 1993-94

The stated goal of the SIG program in 1993-94 was to improve the knowledge levels and competencies of special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and Related Service Providers (RSPs) by offering a variety of training options for all eligible

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** For a full description of the program history, see the 1992-93 OER Evaluation Report.

SIG GOALS AND OPTIONS IN 1993-94

The stated goal of the SIG program in 1993-94 was to improve the knowledge levels and competencies of special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and Related Service Providers (RSPs) by offering a variety of training options for all eligible personnel serving in District 75 programs. Teachers, RSPs, and UFT paraprofessionals were entitled to a maximum of 25 paid participant hours (hours attended beyond the school day). All IEP-mandated DC 37 paraprofessionals were entitled to a maximum of 20 paid participant hours. Two types of training opportunities were available:

- School-based options. In accordance with practices established in previous years, each school was allocated a maximum number of per session hours from which their plan was funded, and schools were permitted to pool resources with other schools to jointly deliver SIG activities. A new school option enabled some schools to convert staff training hours into consultative hours to purchase an approved supplemental staff development program or do a school-wide retreat. Through their Advisory Committees*, schools provided staff development activities, approved by a majority of their SIG-eligible staff.

- District-based options. District 75 offered the choice of five two-hour non-credit-bearing minicourses and up to 25 hours of credit-bearing graduate and undergraduate college courses. All SIG eligible staff were also invited to participate in the annual spring staff development conference.

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* Each school established an Advisory Committee consisting of staff drawn from all program categories. Members included the principal, UFT chapter leader, one teacher, one paraprofessional, and one RSP. In addition, one member of this committee was assigned as the official liaison to the Central Advisory Committee.

planning (B schools), (2) participant assessment of the annual citywide conference, and (3) assessment of the Central Consultation Committee meetings.

Evaluation activities included:

- interviews with three teachers, three paraprofessionals, one RSP, the administrator, and the chairperson of the school-based SIG committee at each of the ten schools, and a survey of other staff at these schools in regard to their 1992-93 training;
- a survey of participants in 11 selected workshops which took place at the District 75 annual spring conference; and
- an assessment of the deliberations of the C.C.C. observed at four meetings.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The 1993-94 evaluation was designed to provide answers to the following questions:

- What differences were there between the A schools (high participation) and the B schools (low participation) with respect to the following?
  - extent of SIG participation by staff in 1992-93 and 1993-94
  - effectiveness of SIG training in 1992-93
  - benefits of SIG training in 1992-93
  - staff awareness of role and functions of the school-based advisory committees (SBACs)
  - staff awareness of SIG options
  - input from staff regarding SIG interests
  - involvement by the administration in SIG matters
- How effective were the 11 workshops sampled by OER?
- How well did the C.C.C. carry out its responsibilities?

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

Chapter II of this report presents the findings obtained from the interviews and surveys of special education staff

participating in and/or knowledgeable about the SIG program, and from observations of four C.C.C. meetings. Chapter III draws conclusions from these findings and offers specific recommendations for 1994-95.

II. FINDINGS

COMPARISON OF A AND B SCHOOLS

As noted in the introduction, Central SIG staff identified five schools where SIG planning and participation were less than optimal and five schools where SIG planning and participation were exemplary. It was furthermore suggested that factors present in the A schools might be replicated by the B schools to improve their SIG participation and planning. It was felt by Central that a comparison of A and B schools might elicit these factors.

Data Collection

Information about the extent and quality of the SIG program and the perceived effectiveness of the SIG school-based advisory committees (SBACs) was obtained from interviews of a sample of local SBAC chairs, school administrators and staff at 10 schools. In addition, other staff at the ten participating schools were surveyed to obtain information to questions which paralled the questions that were asked of the interviewees. These data made it possible to compare A and B schools on different aspects of program implementation. This is supplemented by some key observations at these schools by OER evaluators (see Summary of Comments in Appendix A).

Findings

Participation in SIG. According to the interviewed SBAC chairpeople, the participation by teachers, paraprofessionals and RSPs was higher in the A schools than in the B schools in 1992-93

and 1993-94 (see Table 1). This finding was supported by teachers and paraprofessionals (see Table 2) who reported a higher rate of participation of teachers, paras, and RSPs in the A schools (an average of 86.5 percent) as compared to the B schools (78 percent) in 1992-93. In 1993-94 the reported difference was bigger: 80 percent in the A schools compared to 58 percent in the B schools (see Table 2).

Table 1

Participation in SIG Reported by SBAC Chairpeople

Schools	1992-93		1993-94	
A	Teachers	84.5%	Teachers	83.7%
	Paras	72.0	Paras	71.4
	RSPs	76.0	RSPs	57.4
B	Teachers	56.6	Teachers	57.0
	Paras	58.0	Paras	63.0
	RSPs	55.3	RSPs	56.4

- Reported participation by SBAC chairpeople was considerably higher in the A schools.

Table 2

INTERVIEWS OF TEACHERS, PARAS AND RSPs AT A & B SCHOOLS

Schools	Staff	Percent Participation in 1992-93	Training Effectiveness in 1992-93	Benefits of Trng in 1992-93	SIG Participation in Previous Years	SIG Participation in 1993-94	Knowledge of SIG Chairperson
A	Teachers	87%	• High degree of effectiveness reported.	• High degree of usefulness, improved instruction, better behavior management.	• Most tchrs participated in SIG. Those who did not, were not in school	• 87% of tchrs participating in SIG.	• Tchrs at all schools, except one, identified SIG chairperson.
	Paras	86	• High degree of effectiveness reported.	• High degree of usefulness in dealing with behavior problems, & improved instruction	• For a variety of reasons only 65% of paras participated in SIG.	• 73% of paras participated in SIG.	• Most paras able to identify SIG chairperson.
	RSPs	80	• High degree of effectiveness reported.	• High level of effectiveness at all schools.	• Only 40% of RSPs participated in SIG. Others not in program	• 60% of RSPs participated in SIG. Others unable to schedule time for SIG.	• Most RSPs able to identify SIG chairperson.
B	Teachers	70	• Moderate degree of effectiveness reported.	• High degree of usefulness, improved instruction, & better behavior management.	• Most tchrs participated in SIG. Others not at site or taking courses.	• 50% of tchrs participated in SIG.	• Some tchrs at 3 schools were unable to identify SIG chairperson
	Paras	80	• Except for one school, high degree of effectiveness reported.	• High degree of usefulness in variety of behavior & instructional situations.	• For a variety of reasons only 68% of paras participated in SIG.	• 66% of paras participated in SIG.	• Most paras able to identify SIG chairperson.
	RSPs	80	• High degree of effectiveness reported.	• High degree of effectiveness at each school, except one.	• RSPs at 2 schools were not in program at the time	• All RSPs participated in SIG.	• All RSPs able to identify SIG chairperson.

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The survey data, however, showed little difference in the overall participation rates reported by the A and B schools (see Appendix B-1). Since these rates were estimates and self reports, rather than actual counts, it becomes clear that participation rates alone could not account for the different perceptions of the two groups of schools.

Some significant differences between A and B schools did emerge from the survey on the question of why respondents chose to participate in SIG and the reasons given by those who did not participate. In 1992-93 the percentage of respondents from A schools who participated to develop their professional interests and improve their classroom techniques was higher than in B schools. (see Appendix B-2). Among the non-participants a higher percentage of B school respondents (27 percent) indicated that none of the SIG options interested them, compared to only seven percent in the A schools (see Appendix B-2).

Strategies used by SBACs to encourage participation. The strategies used by SBACs in both groups of schools to encourage participation in SIG were basically the same: verbal encouragement at staff meetings and on a one-to-one basis, written invitations and announcements, and formal memorandums. According to the people interviewed, the differences between the A and B schools were not the specific strategies employed so much as the heightened interest and enthusiasm of the A school SBACs. The SBAC chairpeople and administrators interviewed in the A schools were more specific and emphatic than their counterparts

in B schools in describing how they and the committees were encouraging their peers to participate in the SIG program. The survey data shows that, overall, most A and B schools used similar strategies to encourage SIG participation (see Appendix B-3).

Benefits of training. There was general agreement among the staff interviewed at the A and B schools that those participating in SIG had benefited professionally; that the training had, in a number of ways, impacted on the classroom. There was overall consensus that the training resulted in a high degree of usefulness, improved instruction and better behavior management (see Table 2). Although not indicated in the table, the administrators in the A and B schools were even more generous in the their recitation of the multiple benefits of SIG.

Overall, A school respondents gave a higher rating to their SIG training in 1992-93 (mean rating of 4.2) than the B school participants did (mean rating of 3.9) (see Appendix B-4).

Assessment of SIG training. The interview and survey data suggest a high level of satisfaction with SIG training in both A and B schools. The mean scores were comparable (see Appendix B-5).

Training effectiveness. Interview data cast little doubt about the effectiveness of the SIG training in both the A and B schools. The exceptions were a few schools in the B group where some teachers and paraprofessionals found fault with the training, as indicated by the rating of "moderate effectiveness"

shown in Table 2).

The A and B school SIG chairpeople and administrators also conveyed positive perceptions of the quality of the SIG training. While all made note of positive reactions from staff about the presenters, the A school administrators in particular were more enthusiastic and articulate about the effectiveness of SIG in their schools. It should be noted, however, that the survey data was less positive than the interview data regarding training effectiveness in B schools in that the mean ratings in schools 369K and 370K fell below 4 (see Appendix B-4).

Awareness of role and function of SBACs. A clear difference emerged regarding the A and B school interviewees' awareness of the role and function of their SIG Committee. With the exception of a few paraprofessionals, the staff at the A schools were well aware of the SBAC role, citing many of their specific functions.

Staff Awareness of SIG options. In the interviews, the staff from A and B schools were asked how their SBACs kept them informed about SIG options. On this variable the differences between the A and B schools were not that great. The principal differences were the number of strategies employed and in A school SBAC's active promotion of SIG.

Also, teachers' ratings in the A schools indicated that they were better informed about SIG options than their counterparts in the B schools (see Table 3). The extent of the differences were more clearly expressed by the A school administrators, revealing that their SBACs were much more involved in getting information to their staffs about SIG than by B schools administrators.

Table 3

INTERVIEWS OF TEACHERS, PARAS AND RSPs AT A & B SCHOOLS

Schools	Staff	Awareness of Role/Function of SIG Committee	Keeping Staff Informed About SIG Options	Request for Staff Input by SIG Committee	Interest Inventories	Involvement by Administration	Suggestions
A	Teachers	• Specific functions of committees reported by tchrs at all schools.	• All schools actively involved in keeping staff informed about SIG.	• Three of five schools actively invited tchr input.	• All but a few tchrs submitted interest inventories in all schools.	• Tchrs at all schools reported active involvement by administrators.	• Most suggestions revolve around scheduling of workshops and expanding options.
	Paras	• All but a few paras at one school were aware of the committee functions.	• All but one school actively involved in keeping staff informed about SIG.	• Range of para input varied from low in some schools to very high in other schools.	• All paras submitted interested inventories at all schools.	• Paras at all schools reported active involvement by administrators.	• Varied suggestions dealing with topics, scheduling and reimbursement.
	RSPs	• Four of the RSPs described a variety of the committees' functions	• All schools fully informed about SIG.	• All schools actively invited input from RSPs.	• All but one RSP remembered submitting an interest inventory	• RSPs reported significant support & encouragement from administrators.	• A few suggestions sought more parent-staff activities & mental health options.
B	Teachers	• Knowledge of specific committee functions were limited at 2 schools.	• Except for 2 schools, committees actively involved in keeping staff informed about SIG.	• All schools reported limited efforts to obtain tchr input.	• Some tchrs at 2 schools were not asked to complete interest inventories.	• Except for one school, tchrs reported adequate encouragement from administrators.	• Various suggestions dealing with scheduling, relevancy to students, & better promotion of SIG.
	Paras	• Most paras at 2 schools not aware of committee functions.	• Except for one school, committees informed their staffs about SIG.	• Para input in some schools was very limited and satisfactory in others.	• Some paras at 2 schools did not remember submitting interest inventories.	• Paras reported adequate encouragement by administrators.	• Various suggestions dealing with scheduling, funding more training options, and reimbursement.
	RSPs	• RSPs descriptions of committee functions were limited.	• All schools kept staff informed about SIG.	• All but one RSP was asked for input	• All RSPs submitted interest inventories.	• All RSPs reported some encouragement by administrators.	• All RSPs offered a variety of suggestions.

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A more detailed analysis of the differences was available from the survey data. This identifies the schools where the SBACs were less successful in keeping their staffs informed about SIG options. A few of the B schools were noticeably weak in this regard. Nevertheless, some of the B schools compared well with their A school counterparts. (see Appendix B-6). According to administrators and teachers interviewed, the SBACs at most of the A schools were using many channels of communication, providing greater detail about SIG options, and in general adopting more strategies than were reported by the SBACs in the B schools.

Input from staff regarding SIG interests. Not all SBACs in the A and B schools actively invited input from their staffs. The extent to which SBACs sought input from staff was made very clear in the survey data. This data identified two schools in the B group (369K and 754K) that were consistently weak in obtaining feedback from their staffs (Appendix B-7). However, even in some of the A schools, there were staff members who felt their preferences and interests were never sought.

When it came to the submission of interest inventories, there was a 95 percent staff compliance rate in the A schools compared to 82 percent in the B schools. Some interviewed staff from B schools did not remember submitting interest inventories, nor did they remember being asked to do so by their SBACs.

Involvement by administration in SIG. The various SBAC chairs reported a higher degree of active involvement by school administrators in the A schools than was reported in the B

schools. The A school SBAC chairs provided many examples of administration involvement: making resources available to staff, taking an active part at SBAC meetings, assisting with the selection of SIG topics and encouraging SBAC initiatives. The survey data shows that the level of involvement of principals in the B schools varied from "always present at meetings" to "personal involvement is minimal", suggesting that the overall involvement of B school administrators could best be described as adequate (see Table 3). Overall, the quality of some important aspects of the SIG program in the A schools, as expected, was superior to the B schools. The data underscores the significance of an actively involved SBAC and school administration in the successful implementation of SIG.

DISTRICT 75 ANNUAL STAFF CONFERENCE

Participants' Assessment of the District 75 Conference

The Seventh Annual SIG Staff Development Conference was a collaborative effort of the District 75/Citywide Programs, the Council of Supervisors and Administrators, and the United Federation of Teachers. Teachers, paraprofessionals, RSPs, administrators, and others were offered a variety of workshops from which to select.

Program Participants

According to the information obtained from the District 75 SIG Conference Evaluation Report (April 1994), the conference at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center attracted a total of 1, 972 District 75 special educators and 271 non-District 75 staff (see Table 4).

Table 4

Participants Attending District 75 Annual Conference*

District 75		Non-District 75	
Position	Number	Position	Number
Teachers	927	Teachers	195
Paraprofessionals	961	Paraprofessionals	54
Related Service Providers	60	Related Service Providers	11
Administrators/others	24	Administrators/others	5
Total	1,972		271

* Information obtained from District 75 Conference Report, April 1994.

The 1,972 District 75 people who participated this year represent an 11 percent increase over last year. The largest increases were registered by teachers and paraprofessionals. There were fewer administrators and RSPs in attendance than last year.

In all, a sample of 625 participants in 11 workshops were surveyed by OER. They were asked to rate the quality of the workshops on five dimensions of effectiveness, using a six-point Likert scale with 1=negative and 6=positive. The mean ratings of individual workshops, and combined mean rating, appear in Table 5.

Table 5

Ratings of Workshops by Participants[a]

(N= 625)

Workshop	# Respondents	Mean Ratings
How to Deal With Verbal Abuse	86	5.4
Administrative Issues in Inclusive Education	18	5.1
Attention Deficit Disorders	149	5.1
Conflict Resolution	34	5.0
Behavior Management	55	4.9
Self Esteem and the Paraprofessional	76	4.9
All You Need to Know About AIDS	28	4.9
Sexuality Issues for Students With Learning Disabilities	84	4.6
Learning How to Learn	12	4.6
Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention	23	4.6
Latest Findings on Autism	60	4.5
Combined mean rating		5.0

[a] On a six-point Likert scale from negative (1) to positive (6).

- One-hundred percent of the workshop participants surveyed produced ratings of 4.5 or more, indicating a high level of overall participant satisfaction.

Overall, the professional interests of the respondents were satisfied by the workshops that they had chosen. Four workshops received a ranking of 5.0 or higher, showing a high level of participant satisfaction: "Administrative issues in Inclusive Education", "How to Deal With Verbal Abuse", "Attention Deficit Disorders", and "Conflict Resolution". Table 6 presents a summary of the percentage of respondents who indicated that their professional interests were met.

Table 6

Percentage of Respondents Who Indicated That Their Professional Interests Were Met

Workshop	Respondents
How to Deal With Verbal Abuse	100%
Attention Deficit Disorders	100
Conflict Resolution	100
Self-Esteem and the Paraprofessional	96
Sexuality Issues for Students with L.D.	96
All You Need to Know About AIDS	96
Administrative Issues in Inclusive Education	94
Behavior Management	94
Learning How to Learn	90
Latest Findings on Autism	87
Alcohol Prevention	80

Sixty-five percent of the participants who responded to the open-ended "Comments and Suggestions" question offered positive comments about the workshop, "How to Deal With Verbal Abuse" (Table 7). Participants at last year's annual conference gave similarly high ratings to this workshop. Generally, when more than 40 percent of the participants make positive comments, it reflects well on the overall quality of the workshop. Table 7 summarizes the percentage of respondents for each of the 11 workshops who offered comments and or suggestions, and table 8 provides a sampling of these comments and suggestions.

Table 7

Percentage of Respondent Who Offered Comments

Workshop	Percent
How to Deal with Verbal Abuse	65%
Sexuality Issues for Students with L.D.	50
Learning to Learn	50
Self-Esteem and the Paraprofessional	44
Attention Deficit Disorders	43
Administrative Issues in Inclusion Education	40
Conflict Resolution	34
All You Need to Know About AIDS	25
Latest Findings on Autism	19
Behavior Management	18
Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention	17

- At six workshops positive comments were made by 40 percent or more of the respondents, usually indicative of workshops of good quality .

Table 8

Most Frequent Comments and Suggestions Made by Respondents

Workshop	Comments and Suggestions	Number
How to Deal With Verbal Abuse	• Wonderful/inspiring/ excellent/great	18
	• Presenter knowledgeable/ well organized/informative	10
	• Will help me with my students	8
Sexuality Issues for Students with L.D.	• Excellent presentation/well organized	10
	• Hold such workshops more often/ more in-depth	7
	• Need more practical suggestions	5
Learning to Learn	• Very good/excellent	2
	• Thought-provoking	1
Self-Esteem and the Paraprofessional	• Paras need more time to express ideas	7
	• Well presented	5
	• Very interesting	4
	• Very informative	4
Attention Deficit Disorders	• Extremely informative	13
	• Not enough time allowed	13
	• Excellent/interesting	12
	• Well presented	10
Administrative Issues in Inclusive Education	• Excellent forum for discussion	4
	• Well organized and presented	1
Conflict Resolution	• Excellent/well organized	4
	• More training needed/not enough time	3
	• Need practical techniques	2
All You Need to Know About AIDS	• Need more time	3
	• Very good/interesting	2
	• Very informative	2
Latest Findings on Autism	• Workshop did not deal with topic	8
	• Not enough time to explore topic	2
	• Time wasted by presenters	1
Behavior Management	• Excellent presentation/ well organized	8
	• Not enough time/need more sessions/more often	6
Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention	• Very interesting/helpful	2
	• Not relevant to my students	1
	• Sketchy presentation	1

OBSERVATIONS OF CENTRAL CONSULTATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The evaluation of the C.C.C. is based largely on observations and impressions of the OER evaluator who attended and participated in three full-day meetings and one two-hour meeting of a C.C.C. subcommittee.

The meetings were always collegial and lively. During discussions the interaction was often spirited and friendly. No one, including the chairperson, dominated the deliberations. There were always opportunities for members to ask questions and contribute to the discussion.

While written agendas were distributed at every meeting, it was not unusual to omit or reorder agenda items. This related in part to two problems: the omission and lack of detail in the minutes, and the absence of closure at the conclusion of meetings when important issues regarding decisions and follow-up were not always clearly established.

It was not unusual for the C.C.C. to spend a lot of time debating all aspects of an issue. There were occasions when, in the interests of reaching other agenda items, such discussions could have been curtailed.

The C.C.C. appears to take its responsibility seriously. At the meetings observed, the members of the committee have demonstrated a desire to enhance the operation of SIG in District 75, and have recognized that there is a need for them to become more actively involved. Consequently, they decided to offer the SBACs more direct help by visiting schools and by serving more often as presenters at SIG workshops.

The relationship between the committee and the SIG coordinator is interesting. At times it seems that the committee is more than advisory; it establishes and makes program and policy decisions. The effect of this appears to soften the coordinator's participation at these meetings. He has often deferred to the views of the committee, when his opinions and perspective, had they been expressed, might have changed the outcome of some decisions reached by the group. Nevertheless, the C.C.C. appears to function quite well. The members are clearly committed to the task of devising strategies to maximize staff participation in SIG and to improve the way staff development is delivered in District 75.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The interview and survey findings suggest that the A schools as a group were actively involved in the SIG process, and that the SBACs and the administrators in these schools played an important part in stimulating interest and participation in SIG activities. In contrast, the B school group was less involved in the SIG process and less aware of the role and function of the SBAC.

Differences in reported participation rates between A and B schools, however, were not consistent. Other variables appear to offer better insights into the different perceptions of the two groups of schools.

While the strategies used by SBACs to encourage SIG participation were essentially the same in the A and B schools, the level of interest and motivation in SIG was higher in the A schools. In addition, the A school SBACs more aggressively sought input from their staffs about their professional interests and SIG options than did the B school SBACs. But here too, there were some notable exceptions to these findings within the group of B schools.

In general, the findings indicate that A school respondents benefited to a greater extent from SIG training in 1992-93 than B school staff. There was little difference, however, between the A and B schools about how they felt regarding the quality of the SIG training, which was positive.

The Seventh Annual State Incentive Grant Staff Development Conference in 1994 was very successful, offering workshops that

appealed to a wide segment of professionals. Of the 11 workshops evaluated, four stood out: "Administrative Issues in Inclusive Education", "How to Deal With Verbal Abuse", Attention Deficit Disorders" and "Conflict Resolution". Most of the other workshops were well received by the participants.

The observations of the SIG C.C.C. at selected meetings indicated that committee members are clearly committed to the task of developing strategies to maximize staff participation in SIG and improve the way staff development is delivered in District 75. The decision-making roles of the committee and the SIG coordinator appear to overlap at times, thus raising the question about the primary role of the C.C.C. Some clarification about their respective roles is needed in order foer the C.C.C. and the SIG Coordinator to achieve the collaboration noted in the District 75 SIG Implementation Plan Highlights.

Recommendations

The findings and conclusions in this report indicate that SIG staff development be continued next year with the implementation of the following suggestions:

To increase staff participation in SIG and enhance the effectiveness of the SBACs:

- At their next citywide meeting the SBACs should discuss and share some of the successful strategies employed by the A schools designed to inform staff about SIG options and encourage their input in the planning and implementation process.
- The C.C.C. should encourage school-based administrators to become more involved in SIG as active members of their SBACs.
- Members of the C.C.C. should provide on-site assistance to SBACs at schools where staff interest and participation in SIG is less than desirable.

- Schools should be encouraged to share their staff development experiences and successes. Joint planning and implementation of SIG options between neighboring schools would stimulate interest and make for more effective utilization of skilled presenters.

To capitalize on the successes of last year's annual staff conference:

- Workshops that attracted large audiences and received high ratings from participants should be repeated to accommodate wider participation. Identify the reasons for the poorly attended and/or less successful workshops and adopt necessary scheduling and leadership changes.

- Hold the conference earlier in the school year to give participants an opportunity to identify areas of particular relevance to their school's needs, enabling SBAC members to tap into a resource pool of potential presenters.

- Consider holding borough SBAC workshops to encourage intra-school SIG staff development activities.

To improve the operational effectiveness of the C.C.C. and expand its influence on the performance of the SBACs:

- Members of the C.C.C. should begin the practice of making site visits to schools to provide support and technical assistance to administrators and SBACs. The main goal of the C.C.C. representatives would be to help schools obtain a consensus on what constitutes their greatest needs or highest priorities, from which the SIG options can be developed.

- The advisory and decision-making roles of the C.C.C.should be clarified and the decision-making responsibilities of the SIG Coordinator clearly defined. It appears that the best interests of the SIG program would be served by a more collaborative working relationship between the C.C.C. and the SIG Coordinator.

APPENDIX A

COMMENTS BY OER EVALUATORS

APPENDIX A

COMMENTS BY OER EVALUATORS

Group	School	Comments
A	721R	• Interviews yielded a consistent praising of SIG and enthusiastic involvement in some of its training workshops. • SIG committee is highly visible and extremely well regarded. • The entire SBM committee is actively involved in the planning, implementation and promotion of SIG. • Options clearly appear to reflect the needs and interests of the staff and parents. • Administration appears to be very much committed to fostering staff and parent training and encourages a wide base of staff decision-making.
	4Q	• The school administration is extremely committed to SIG training and has been most conspicuous in its involvement in the planning and implementation of all SIG initiatives. • There appears to be genuine efforts made to involve all staff in the selection of SIG training options.
	231K	• The SIG committee functions like an SBM model school program. • Each member of the committee assumes responsibility for some aspect of the committee's operation.
	4K	• A very good practice by the SIG committee is to have each staff member do an evaluation of each workshop. • Another good practice adopted by the committee is to try to use staff to be workshop trainers.
	226M	• Not only do the principal and SIG chairperson aggressively promote staff participation, they emphasize staff participation in the design of the courses based on their needs. • The school uses the unit system, whereby the unit head of each of the six sites meets as part of the SIG committee under the auspices of the SBM.
B	58M	• The SIG chairperson was either not known or confused with the SBM chairperson. • Some staff members were not entirely sure about the course offerings and had not signed up for any of them, suggesting that course listings may not have been advertised in advance..
	370K	• The committee is functioning better because responsibilities have been delegated to individual committee members. • Other commendable features of the SIG program are the integration of parents into the SIG workshops and the attempts to tap into community resources.
	75Q	• Staff member input in the planning of courses did not appear to be very strong. • City-wide coordinator appears to be well thought of and when called upon was always available and helpful.
	754X	• The SIG committee does not appear to be particularly visible. • The committee chairperson apparently has not operated with a wide base of staff involvement. • It appears that little staff input was provided in the planning of SIG at this site. • The central SIG coordinator has been extremely responsive and helpful in planning and implementing SIG.
	369K	• The main failing of the program is that there appears to have been only one training workshop held during this entire school year. • The committee appears to be doing a good job in carrying out all the practices of a successful SIG operation. • The principal is doing a good job in encouraging staff to participate in the SIG workshops. • There is a reservoir of interested staff who would benefit by having more workshops. • There needs to be an expediter or facilitator to help the committee implement its plans.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY TABLES

APPENDIX B-1

Comparison of Self-Reported Participation Rates

A Schools	Percent Participation	
	1992-93	1993-94
231K	48%	65%
4K	59	54
4Q	50	60
721R	86	85
226M	64	76
Average	61	68
B Schools		
75Q	83	44
369K	60	57
370	59	88
754X	62	56
58M	62	86
Average	65	66

- There was no difference in the overall reported participation rates between the A and B schools.

APPENDIX B-2

Reasons Checked for SIG Participation and Non-Participation[a]

Reasons for Participating in 1992-93

Reason	Percentage of Respondents A Schools	B Schools
• For professional development	90%	81%
• To improve classroom techniques	53	31
• Training is convieniently located	38	57
• Options sound interesting	16	28

Reasons for Not Participating	Percentage of Respondents A Schools		B Schools	
	92-93	93-94	92-93	93-94
• No time after school	50	79	47	70
• Inconvienient location	10	10	00	00
• No interest in SIG options	07	07	27	14
• Not informed about SIG	06	09	08	14
• Don't need professional development	00	00	07	00
• Other	22	27	13	28

[a] Some respondents chose more than one reason for participating or not participating. Others did not respond to the questions.

APPENDIX B-3

Primary Strategies Used By School-Based Committees in A And B Schools to Encourage Staff Participation [a]

Variable	Percent Respondents A Schools		B Schools	
• Encouraged participation at staff meetings	231K	51%	75Q	83%
	4K	59	369K	60
	4Q	50	370K	71
	721R	58	754X	29
	226M	66	58M	76
• Invited staff participation through written memos/notices	231K	32%	75Q	39%
	4K	29	369K	20
	4Q	19	370K	35
	721R	27	754X	33
	226M	21	58M	05
• Had little or nothing to say about SIG	231K	32%	75Q	00%
	4K	00	369K	00
	4Q	13	370K	00
	721R	09	754X	29
	226M	04	58M	05

[a] Though asked to choose one strategy, some respondents chose more than one. A few respondents did not respond to this question at all.

APPENDIX B-4

Extent to Which Respondents Felt They Benefited From SIG Training In 1992-93

A Schools	Mean*	B Schools	Mean*
231K	4.0	75Q	4.3
4K	4.1	369K	3.2
4Q	4.2	370K	3.6
721R	4.6	754X	4.0
226M	4.3	58M	4.3
Average	4.2		3.9

* Means were derived from scores on a 5 point scale with 1= none and 5= a great deal.

Appendix B-5

Respondents' Assessment of the SIG Training in 1992-93

A Schools	Mean*	B Schools	Mean*
231K	4.1	75Q	4.3
4K	3.9	369K	3.2
4Q	4.1	370K	3.7
721R	4.7	754X	4.2
226M	4.4	58M	4.4
Average	4.2		4.0

* Means were derived from scores on a 5 point scale with 1= poor and 5= excellent.

APPENDIX B-6

Extent to Which School-Based Committees Kept Staff Informed About SIG Options

Variable	A Schools	Percent Respondents	B Schools	
• Very informative	231K	61%	75Q	89%
	4K	83	369K	00
	4Q	69	370K	77
	721R	78	754X	33
	226M	66	58M	81
• Information not provided early enough	231K	08	75Q	00
	4K	00	369K	20
	4Q	00	370K	24
	721R	06	754X	12
	226M	06	58M	05
• Could be more informative	231K	17	75Q	00
	4K	12	369K	60
	4Q	00	370K	00
	721R	09	754X	33
	226M	26	58M	14
• Heard nothing from SIG Committee	231K	08	75Q	00
	4K	00	369K	20
	4Q	13	370K	00
	721R	00	754X	14
	226M	00	58M	00

APPENDIX B-7

Extent to Which School-Based Committees Sought Input From Staff

Variable	Percent Respondents A Schools		B Schools	
• Preferences and interests sought often	231K	46%	75Q	94%
	4K	77	369K	30
	4Q	63	370K	82
	721R	69	754X	31
	226M	57	58M	81
• Preferences and interests sought only once	231K	23	75Q	06
	4K	06	369K	30
	4Q	00	370K	12
	721R	04	754X	14
	226M	06	58M	00
• Preferences and interests sought only indirectly	231K	09	75Q	00
	4K	06	369K	20
	4Q	00	370K	00
	721R	09	754X	17
	226M	11	58M	10
• Preferences and interests were never sought	231K	17	75Q	00
	4K	00	369K	20
	4Q	13	370K	00
	721R	06	754X	33
	226M	13	58M	10